

The Killing Zone

*The United States Wages Cold War
in Latin America*



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THE UNITED STATES AND LATIN AMERICA:
COLD WAR CHRONOLOGY



1945

- Meeting in Mexico City, the United States and Latin American nations issue the Act of Chapultepec, pledging collective security. The meeting represents the highpoint of inter-American wartime cooperation.
- President Franklin Delano Roosevelt dies in April and is succeeded by Vice President Harry S. Truman. President Roosevelt has been associated in Latin America with the Good Neighbor Policy and the principle of non-intervention.
- World War II ends with the surrender of Germany in May and Japan in August.

1946

- The United States unsuccessfully tries to persuade Argentines not to elect Juan Perón as president of Argentina.
- The Truman administration declines to schedule an economic conference with Latin Americans to discuss economic aid.

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1947

- In March, President Truman pronounces his "Truman Doctrine." The policy is established that the United States will assist anticommunist forces.
- Secretary of State George Marshall delivers a speech in June calling for economic assistance for postwar Europe. The "Marshall Plan" will ensue the next year.
- George Kennan publishes an article in *Foreign Affairs* that will serve as the basis for the U.S. policy of "containing" the Soviet Union and communism.
- The United States concludes in September the Rio Treaty with Latin America. Western Hemisphere nations will form a military alliance against aggression.

1952

In a policy paper, NSC 1/6, the State Department concludes in March that Communism is not a threat in Latin America. At an inter-American meeting in April in Bogotá, Secretary of State Marshall informs delegates that there will not be a "Marshall Plan for Latin America." Delegates establish the Organization of American States, which incorporates the non-intervention principle. In November, military officers in Venezuela overthrow a constitutional government. The military action seemingly signals the end of the movement toward democracy and social reform throughout the region. On 10 December, the United Nations adopts the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Eleanor Roosevelt, widow of President Roosevelt, had led the movement to adopt the declaration.

In September, the United States announces that the Soviet Union has successfully tested an atomic weapon. Communist leader Mao Zedong proclaims on 1 October the People's Republic of China.

In February, Senator Joseph McCarthy makes sensational allegations about Communist influence within the U.S. government. George Kennan tours Latin America and subsequently submits report recommending support for anti-Communists in Latin America even if they are authoritarian and undemocratic.

In April, President Truman secretly approves the policy paper NSC 68/2, which calls on the United States to confront the Soviet Union globally with awesome military power.

In April, Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America Edward Miller delivers his "Miller Doctrine" speech, suggesting that in the fight against communism the United States could not abide by the non-intervention principle. In May, the Truman administration adopts the policy paper NSC 56/2, authorizing military aid for Latin America to fight the Cold War. Aid to Latin American militaries begins in 1951.

In June, the Korean War begins when North Korea invades South Korea. • In September, President Juan Perón is overthrown by the Argentine military. Three decades of political instability ensue in Argentina.

- In March, Fulgencio Batista seizes power in Cuba.
- In June, Guatemala issues Decree 900, expropriating large landholdings, including properties of the United Fruit Company.
- President Truman recognizes the Bolivian Revolution in June. Assured of the non-Communist nature of the revolution, both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations provide economic assistance to Bolivia.
- In July, President Truman approves PBFORTUNE, a covert plan to overthrow the Guatemalan government.
- In October, Secretary of State Dean Acheson halts PBFORTUNE.

1953

- President Dwight D. Eisenhower takes office.
- In March, President Eisenhower approves policy paper NSC 144/1 that confidentially notes that the United States cannot observe the non-intervention principle in the Cold War.
- On 26 July, Fidel Castro leads Cuban rebels on an assault on Moncada army barracks in an unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the government of Fulgencio Batista.
- In August, President Eisenhower approves PBSUCCESS, a covert plan to overthrow the Guatemalan government.
- With U.S. approval, the United Kingdom overthrows in October the elected government of Cheddi Jagan in British Guyana.

1954

- With CIA backing, Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas overthrows in June the constitutional Guatemalan government of President Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán.
- In September, U.S. analysts, operating under PBHISTORY, report that they can find no evidence in Guatemalan archives of links between President Arbenz and international communism.
- A presidential panel, the Doolittle Commission, recommends that the United States improve its abilities to intervene covertly in other nations.
- The Eisenhower administration awards the Legion of Merit to Marcos Pérez Jiménez, the dictator of Venezuela.

1955

- In September, President Juan Perón is overthrown by the Argentine military. Castro and the survivors seek refuge in Cuban mountains in the eastern part of the island.
- On 2 December, Fidel Castro and supporters land in Cuba on a small boat, the *Granma*. Cuban forces kill most of the invaders. Castro and the survivors seek refuge in Cuban mountains in the eastern part of the island.

1956

- The Washington Conference concludes in April, with the Truman administration unable to persuade most Latin American nations to contribute troops for the Korean War. The failure signals the end of the cooperation between the United States and its Latin American allies during World War II.

In July, President Castillo Armas of Guatemala is assassinated.

- In January, Colonel Marcos Pérez Jiménez, the dictator of Venezuela, is overthrown by a popular movement. His overthrow marks a movement toward constitutional regimes throughout the region.
- With the Castro insurgency spreading, the United States cuts off arms shipments to Batista in March.
- Vice President Richard Nixon travels to South America and is threatened with physical harm during a riot in May in Caracas, Venezuela.
- The Marxist political leader, Salvador Allende, nearly wins Chilean presidential election held in September.

In January, Fidel Castro assumes power in Cuba.
In April, the revolutionary government of Cuba adopts an extensive agrarian reform law.

In April, Castro meets with Vice President Nixon in Washington.
In December, Colonel J. C. King of the CIA calls for the "elimination" of Castro.

In February, Cuba signs a commercial agreement with the Soviet Union.
In March, President Eisenhower authorizes a program to overthrow Castro.
President Eisenhower announces the Social Progress Trust Fund for Latin America. The July announcement breaks with the fifteen-year U.S. policy of not providing extensive economic assistance to the region.

The MR-13 Rebellion breaks out in Guatemala in November. The rebels protest both social injustice and the U.S. role in their country. More than three decades of political violence in Guatemala will ensue.

- 1**
- On 3 January, President Eisenhower breaks diplomatic relations with Cuba.
 - On 6 January, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's delivers his "Wars of National Liberation Speech."
 - On 19 January, President Eisenhower warns President-elect John F. Kennedy that the United States cannot live with Fidel Castro. Kennedy takes office the next day.
 - On 1 March, President Kennedy creates the Peace Corps. Between 1961 and

- On 17-19 April, Cuban exiles invade at the Bay of Pigs. Castro's forces easily rout the invaders.
- On May 30, Dominican dissidents assassinate Rafael Trujillo, dictator of the Dominican Republic. The dissidents had received weapons from the United States.

In early June, President Kennedy meets with Soviet Premier Khrushchev in Vienna. Kennedy concludes that Khrushchev will support revolution in Latin America.

- The United States meets in August with Latin American nations at Punta del Este, Uruguay, to plan the Alliance for Progress.
- In October, President Kennedy hosts Prime Minister Cheddi Jagan of British Guiana in the White House. Kennedy decides that Jagan must not be allowed to be the leader of an independent Guyana.
- In November, President Kennedy authorizes Operation Mongoose, a covert plan to destabilize Cuba.
- The Kennedy administration employs diplomatic and military pressure to force the remaining members of the Trujillo family out of the Dominican Republic.

1962

- In late March, the Argentine military overthrows President Arturo Frondizi. Frondizi had angered the Kennedy administration by maintaining relations with Cuba.
- Attorney General Robert Kennedy receives a briefing in May on U.S. efforts to assassinate Castro.
- In August, the Kennedy administration begins to provide extensive aid to Latin American police forces through the Office of Public Safety (OPS).
- The Cuban Missile Crisis erupts in October.
- On 20 November, President Kennedy announces the end of the Cuban Missile Crisis but continues covert efforts to destabilize Cuba.
- In December, Attorney General Kennedy journeys to Brazil to inform President João Goulart of U.S. displeasure with his domestic and international policies.

1963

- In March, the Kennedy administration encourages a military seizure of power in Guatemala to prevent former President Juan José Arevalo from returning to office.
- In June President Kennedy, using the rubric of "Higher Authority," authorizes a sabotage campaign against Cuba.
- On 30 June, President Kennedy meets with Prime Minister Harold Macmillan in England and demands that the United Kingdom prevent Jagan from leading an independent Guyana.

In November, Venezuela announces it has discovered a cache of Cuban arms on the Venezuelan coast.

On November 18, President Kennedy gives his last speech on international affairs, pronounces the "Kennedy Doctrine," and says that Castro is a "barrier" to be removed.

On 22 November, President Kennedy is assassinated. On the same day, the CIA continues the assassination plots against Castro, meeting with "AM/Lash" in Paris.

In December, Venezuela conducts a successful presidential election, despite threats from Cuban-inspired insurgents.

In January, riots break out in Panama over U.S. policies in the Canal Zone. Negotiations will ensue to change the U.S. control over the Panama Canal and lead to the Canal Treaties of 1977-78.

In March, Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Mann pronounces his "Mann Doctrine." The United States will work with military regimes to prevent communism.

In April, the Brazilian military, with U.S. encouragement, overthrows President Goulart. Two decades of military dictatorship ensues.

Eduardo Frei, the U.S.-supported candidate, defeats Salvador Allende in the September Chilean presidential election.

Cheddi Jagan is denied power in December in a proportional representation election system in British Guyana. Forbes Burnham takes power and creates a dictatorship in independent Guyana that will last two decades.

5 In March, President Johnson begins his massive buildup of U.S. ground forces in Vietnam.

In late April, the United States invades the Dominican Republic.

On 2 May, President Johnson pronounces his "Johnson Doctrine," vowing to prevent communism in the hemisphere.

In June, President Johnson shuts down covert war against Castro.

- In October, Che Guevara enters Bolivia with the goal of leading a revolutionary movement.

1967

- In October, Bolivian military forces, trained by the United States, capture and execute Che Guevara.

1968

- In September, the Conference of Latin American Bishops, meeting in Medellin, Colombia, issues a statement calling for the organization of the poor at the local level.
- The United States helps Forbes Burnham of Guyana rig the election, which is held in December.
- In December, Brazil's military rulers issue Decree 5, which outlaws dissent in the country.

1969

- President Richard Nixon takes office and makes Henry Kissinger his chief foreign-policy advisor.
- In May, Latin American delegates issue the Consensus of Viña del Mar. They call for fairer terms of trade for Latin America. The delegates tacitly concede that the Alliance for Progress has not transformed the region.
- In July, the Nixon administration adopts its policy paper for Latin America, NSSM 15. The United States should respond to Latin America's trade concerns.
- Governor Nelson Rockefeller submits in August his report to President Nixon. Rockefeller agrees that the United States should address trade issues. Rockefeller also suggests that the Latin American military will "modernize" the region.
- On 31 October, President Nixon delivers his only major address on inter-American affairs. He pledges a new attitude toward the region.

1970

- Salvador Allende wins a plurality of votes in the September presidential election in Chile.
- On 15 September, the Nixon administration initiates Project FUBELT to block Allende from becoming president.
- On 22 October, General René Schneider, a constitutionalist, is assassinated by Chilean military men.
- On 24 October, the Chilean legislature ratifies the results of the presidential election. Salvador Allende takes office in November.
- On 9 November, President Nixon adopts policy paper NSDM 93. The United States will pursue a policy of hostility toward Allende.

6 The Guatemalan military, with U.S. assistance, launches in March *Operación Limpieza*, a counterinsurgency campaign.

- In April, Senator J. William Fulbright, chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, delivers his "Arrogance of Power" speech. Fulbright denounces President Johnson's invasion of the Dominican Republic and his Vietnam policy.
- Joaquín Balaguer, the U.S.-backed candidate, wins in June the presidential

President Nixon hosts Emílio Garrastazú Médici, the military dictator of Brazil, in Washington in December. The leaders agree to cooperate in opposing Allende.

1976

- An earthquake devastates Managua in December. The Nicaraguan government of Anastasio Somoza Debayle embezzles international relief aid.
- In January, the United States signs the Paris Accords, ending the U.S. war in Vietnam.
- In March, Allende's political coalition, *Unidad Popular*, increases its strength in legislative elections.
- In June, the military seizes effective power in Uruguay, ending the country's long history of constitutionalism.
- In August, Chilean truckers launch a strike. The CIA funds groups that support strikers. Political and economic chaos spreads throughout the country.
- On 11 September, the Chilean military, led by General Augusto Pinochet, overthrows Allende. President Allende commits suicide.
- On 13 September, the United States rushes aid to Pinochet and grants him diplomatic recognition on 24 September. Chile will have seventeen years of military rule under General Pinochet.
- After eighteen years of exile, Juan Perón returns to Argentina, wins a presidential election, and becomes president in October. His wife, Isabel Martínez Perón, is elected vice president.

4 In July, Argentine President Juan Perón dies in office and is succeeded by Isabel Perón.

- In August, President Nixon resigns, after being impeached for "high crimes and misdemeanors" by the House of Representatives. Gerald Ford becomes president.
- In September, Chilean General Carlos Prats and his wife, who are living in exile in Buenos Aires, are assassinated by Chilean intelligence agents.
- The U.S. Congress abolishes the Office of Public Safety in response to reports of human rights abuses carried out by U.S.-trained police officers in countries such as Uruguay.

A congressional committee, the Church Committee, releases reports documenting the U.S. involvement in the assassination efforts against Fidel Castro, Rafael Trujillo, and General Schneider and the U.S. involvement in the overthrow of President Allende.

1976

- In March, Argentine generals overthrow President Isabel Perón, seize power, and launch their "dirty war" against political leftists.
- In June, Secretary of State Kissinger meets with General Pinochet in Santiago and assures him of U.S. support. Kissinger also delivers a speech defending human rights principles.
- In September, Orlando Letelier, the former Chilean ambassador to the United States, and Ronni Moffitt, a U.S. citizen, are assassinated in Washington, D.C., by Chilean agents.
- Secretary Kissinger meets in October with the Argentine foreign minister in Washington and assures him of U.S. support for Argentina's war against radicals.

1977

- President Jimmy Carter takes office. He emphasizes his commitment to human rights principles in a speech to the United Nations in March.
- The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo begin to march, protesting the disappearance of their children in Argentina.
- In September, the United States and Panama sign treaties giving Panama control over the Panama Canal by the end of the century. The U.S. Senate ratifies the treaties the next year.

1978

4 In January, Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, the editor of *La Prensa* and a critic of the Somoza dynasty in Nicaragua, is assassinated. The civil war in Nicaragua intensifies.

1979

- Anastasio Somoza Debayle, the dictator of Nicaragua, flees in July. The revolutionary organization, the Sandinistas, take power.
- In September, the Argentine military, responding to U.S. pressure, releases Jacobo Timerman, a publisher and human rights activist, from prison.
- In October, General Carlos Humberto Romero, the dictator of El Salvador, is overthrown by a military-civilian coalition that pledges to bring reform to the country.

1980

- In November, Chile organizes Operation Condor, a form of state-sponsored international terrorism. The military dictatorships of Southern Cone coun-
- In March, Oscar Romero, the archbishop of San Salvador and a human

In December, four Roman Catholic nuns, who are U.S. citizens, are murdered by Salvadoran military forces.

- President Ronald Reagan takes office in January.
- In February, the Reagan administration issues a White Paper, alleging Sandinista interference in El Salvador.
- In March, President Reagan approves military aid for El Salvador that will eventually amount to over \$1 billion in the 1980s.
- In April, the Reagan administration suspends the Carter administration's economic aid program for Nicaragua.
- In November, President Reagan authorizes a program, NSDD 17, to overthrow the Sandinista government of Nicaragua.
- In November, Salvadoran security forces massacre more than eight hundred civilians in the village of El Mozote.

- 2**
- In April, the military rulers of Argentina launch an invasion of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas). The United Kingdom's defeat of Argentine forces and recapture of the Falklands in June hastens the end of the military dictatorship.
 - In July, the Guatemalan military begins to execute Operation Sofia, an attack on Mayan communities.
 - In December, Gabriel García Márquez, the Colombian novelist, gives his Nobel Prize speech lamenting the violence in Latin America.

- At a news briefing in December, President Reagan defends the Guatemalan leader, General Efraín Ríos Montt, who is overseeing the destruction of Mayan villages.
- In late December, Congress passes and President Reagan signs the first of the Boland Amendments, which restricts U.S. aid to Nicaraguan opponents of the Sandinistas.

- 83**
- In July, Latin American leaders, the Contadora Group, call for the end of foreign intervention in Central America.
 - In October, the United States invades Grenada and overthrows the leftist regime.
 - Democracy is restored in Argentina with inauguration in December of President Raúl Alfonsín.

- 84**
- In January, a U.S. commission headed by Henry Kissinger issues a report on military aid to Central America.
 - In January, a U.S. commission headed by General Pinochet relinquishing power and the election of Patricio Aylwin as president.

- In May, the U.S.-backed candidate, José Napoleón Duarte, wins the presidential election in El Salvador.
- The study *Nunca Mais* is published in Argentina. It exposes the atrocities committed by the Argentine military during the dirty war.

1985

- Democracy is restored in Brazil with the election in January of Tancredo Neves as president.
- At a February news conference, President Reagan admits that it is U.S. policy to overthrow the Sandinista government of Nicaragua.
- Democracy is restored in Uruguay with the inauguration in March of President Julio María Sanguinetti.

1986

- In June, the World Court finds the United States guilty of violating Nicaragua's sovereignty.
- In November, U.S. citizens learn of the Iran-contra scandal. The Reagan administration has been violating the Boland Amendments, illegally funding the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries or *contras*.
- The archbishop of São Paulo publishes *Nunca Mais*, documenting atrocities committed by the Brazilian military.

1987

- In August, Central American presidents sign a peace agreement.
- President Óscar Arias Sánchez of Costa Rica wins the Nobel Prize for Peace for his efforts to mediate the conflicts in Central America.

1988

- In a plebiscite held in October, Chileans vote to reject the continuation of General Pinochet in office.

1989

- In January, President George H. W. Bush takes office.
- In August, Central American presidents sign a peace agreement.
- President Óscar Arias Sánchez of Costa Rica wins the Nobel Prize for Peace for his efforts to mediate the conflicts in Central America.
- In November, military forces in El Salvador murder six Jesuit priests on their university campus.
- In December, U.S. military forces invade Panama and arrest Manuel Noriega.

1990

- In Chile, democracy is restored in March, with General Pinochet relinquishing power and the election of Patricio Aylwin as president.

The Sandinistas relinquish power in April in Nicaragua, with Violeta Chamorro becoming president. In May, Arthur M. Schlesinger publicly apologizes to Cheddi Jagan for U.S. hostility toward him during the Kennedy administration.

In February, the Rettig Report is released, documenting political murders in Chile during the Pinochet regime. The Soviet Union collapses in August, and the new leader, Boris Yeltsin, subsequently abolishes the Communist Party in Russia. In September, the Bush administration and the new government in Nicaragua settle the World Court judgment against the United States.

In January, the civil war in El Salvador ends, with the government and leftist groups signing a peace accord. In October, Cheddi Jagan is elected the head of state of Guyana. Former President Carter supervises the election. Rigoberta Menchú, a Guatemalan human rights activist and representative of indigenous communities, is awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace.

3 In January, President Bill Clinton takes office.
• Russia withdraws troops from Cuba. Soviet troops had been in Cuba since 1962.

16 In December, the civil war in Guatemala ends with the signing of a peace accord between the government and leftist groups.

18 In April Bishop Juan José Gerardi of Guatemala is murdered two days after the release of his study, *Nunca Mas*, which documents human rights abuses by security forces.
• In October, General Pinochet is arrested in London. A judge in Spain has requested his extradition to stand trial for human rights abuses.

99 In February, an international commission releases a report, *Guatemala: Memory of Silence*, which documents human rights abuses in Guatemala from 1954 to 1996.
• President Clinton apologizes for the U.S. role in the Guatemalan civil war. President Clinton apologizes for the U.S. role in the Guatemalan civil war. President Clinton apologizes for the U.S. role in the Guatemalan civil war. President Clinton apologizes for the U.S. role in the Guatemalan civil war.

2000

- In March 2000, General Pinochet is released on medical grounds by the United Kingdom and returns to Chile.
- In December, the Clinton administration closes the School of the Americas. It had trained Latin American military officers for five decades. It reopens the next year as the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation.

2001

- In January, President George W. Bush takes office.
- 2002
- In April, Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez survives an attempt to overthrow him. The George W. Bush administration approved of the attempt.

2003

- Secretary of State Colin Powell apologizes for the U.S. role in the overthrow of Allende in Chile.
- 2004
- In November, in Chile the first part of the Valech Report is released, detailing human rights abuses by security forces during the Pinochet regime. A second part of the report is released in 2005.

2006

- In March, Patricia Derian, who served as assistant secretary of state for human rights during the Carter administration, receives an award from Argentina for her defense of human rights during Argentina's military rule.
- In July, an ailing Fidel Castro transfers his duties as president and head of the Communist Party to his brother Raúl Castro.
- In December, General Pinochet dies in Chile, having never stood trial.

2008

- In June, Manuel Contreras, the head of Operation Condor, receives two life sentences from a Chilean court for the assassination of General Prats and his wife.
- In September, Michelle Bachelet of Chile presents an award to Senator Edward M. Kennedy for his defense of human rights during the Pinochet years.
- In October, an Argentine court sentences General Jorge Videla to military prison for human rights abuses. General Videla had previously been convicted in 1985.

2009

President Clinton apologizes for the U.S. role in the Guatemalan civil war. President Clinton apologizes for the U.S. role in the Guatemalan civil war. President Clinton apologizes for the U.S. role in the Guatemalan civil war. President Clinton apologizes for the U.S. role in the Guatemalan civil war.

In December, a Chilean judge rules that former President Eduardo Frei had been poisoned in the early 1980s by agents of the Pinochet regime.

In April, Reynaldo Bignone, the last leader of Argentina's dictatorship, receives a twenty-five-year sentence for human rights abuses from an Argentine court.

INTRODUCTION



The Cold War is over. The momentous battle between the United States and the Soviet Union for the hearts, minds, even “the soul of mankind” that dominated international life from 1945 to 1991 ended suddenly, with little warning. During the period between 1989 and 1991, the world witnessed some of the most breath-taking developments in human history—the breaching of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Empire first in Eastern Europe and then in the Baltic Republics, the overthrow of the Communist system itself in Russia, and finally the breakup of the Soviet Union. The end of Soviet tyranny meant that millions of Europeans, from Estonians to Hungarians to Ukrainians, had the chance to fulfill their national aspirations and enjoy their freedom. History seemed to work out in the way that diplomat and Soviet expert George F. Kennan predicted in his 1946 “Long Telegram” and in his “The Sources of Soviet Conduct” article published in 1947. Kennan had called on the Harry S. Truman administration to develop measures to “contain” the Soviet Union. Kennan reasoned that if the United States remained steadfast that eventually the Soviet Union would falter and then implode. The architects of U.S. Cold War policies—President Truman, Secretaries of State George Marshall and Dean Acheson, and foreign-policy experts like Kennan and Paul Nitze—are celebrated as visionaries. Their handiwork—the Truman Doctrine (1947), the Marshall Plan (1948), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (1949), and National Security Council Memorandum 68/2 (1950)—served as the framework for Cold War victory.¹ President Truman, spectacularly unpopular with the U.S. public during his time in office, is now ranked as one of the “greatest” presidents in U.S. history. Other presidents who are perceived as effectively waging Cold War, like John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan, also enjoy great historical prestige.

My teaching and scholarly experiences have led me to accept, in part, this congratulatory view of U.S. Cold War policies. Over the past two decades, I have had

treaty obligations not to intervene in Latin America. As did their predecessors from Grover Cleveland to Franklin Roosevelt, U.S. Cold War leaders held upholding international peace and security depended upon keeping the traditional U.S. sphere of influence intact and in line. When Latin Americans resisted Cold War objectives, U.S. policymakers reacted with the same interventionist policies and superior attitudes that had characterized U.S. behavior in the first part of the twentieth century.

CHAPTER 2



The Kennan Corollary

The Harry S. Truman administration constructed the framework of the Cold War policies that the United States would pursue against the Soviet Union. In 1947, the administration accepted the premises of “containment.” The United States would prevent the expansion of the Soviet Union and the international Communist movement. In March 1947, President Truman announced his Truman Doctrine, vowing that the United States would provide economic and military assistance to nations threatened by communism. With the Marshall Plan, the United States promised to rebuild Western Europe as a bulwark against the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe. In 1949, the United States formed a military alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), with allies in Europe and North America. Finally, in mid-1950, President Truman confidentially approved a detailed blueprint for Cold War, National Security Council Memorandum No. 68/2 (NSC 68/2). The document warned that the Soviet Union and communism threatened the survival of Western civilization. The United States must respond, by developing awesome military power to combat and defeat the international Communist movement.

During the Truman years, the United States would perceive Latin America as a Cold War arena, albeit not yet as a central front in the struggle against the Soviet Union. U.S. officials would make decisions about Latin America based on their weighing of the international balance of power. In the postwar years, they viewed Latin America through a global rather than a regional prism. Latin Americans needed to be steady allies of the United States who followed the U.S. lead in the international arena and supplied primary products and raw materials to the United States and its allies. Latin Americans had to understand that the United States could no longer pay attention to the region. The United States had the staggering responsibility of protecting Europe and Asia from communism. The Cold War made Latin America globally insignificant. When Latin Americans protested these analyses, U.S. officials drew darker conclusions. Latin Americans were irre-

THE KILLING ZONE

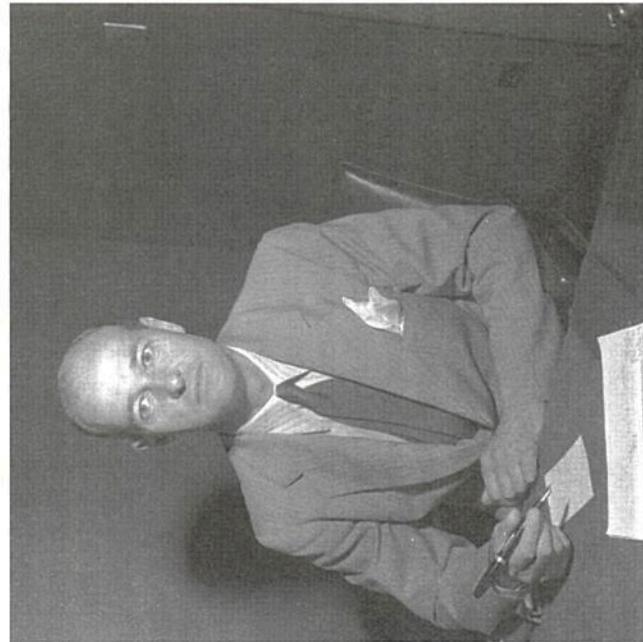
ommunism both abroad and at home. Truman administration officials told an ironic and largely unknown way, a revered U.S. diplomat, who professed to know little about Latin America, reasoned out what would become the Cold War policy of the United States for the region. George F. Kennan was a veteran foreign-service officer who specialized in Russian/Soviet affairs. Kennan sent the famous eight-thousand-word “Long Telegram” from Moscow in 1946 and published an article, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” in 1947 in the influential journal *Foreign Affairs*, under the pseudonym of “X.” In these pieces, Kennan argued that ideology rather than national security concerns underlay the foreign policies of the Soviet Union under the brutal Joseph Stalin. The Soviet Union acted aggressively, constantly testing and probing the tenacity of democratic nations, because it was driven by the Marxist-Leninist imperative to destroy the international capitalist system. Stalin kept the world in a constant state of turmoil as a way of justifying and covering up his barbaric dictatorship. The United States could not peacefully coexist with such a nation and leader, because it was the implacable desire of Communists to destroy the United States and its allies. Kennan advised that the United States needed to be steadfast and patient and to “contain” the Soviet Union. Faced with resolute resistance from the West, the Soviet Union would eventually implode, succumbing to the internal contradictions inherent in the Communist system. In his commentaries, Kennan did not make clear where the United States should contain the Soviet Union and by what means. Kennan’s words could be interpreted as urging global containment by military means. Kennan also drew no sharp distinction between the Soviet Union and the ideology of communism. National leaders, such as Vietnam’s Ho Chi Minh, might adopt communism for their own purposes and not to supplement the power of the Soviet Union. Kennan would later claim that he had used imprecise language and did not intend to urge a global crusade against the international Communist movement. Nonetheless, his ideas informed such crucial initiatives as the Truman Doctrine. From 1947 to 1950, Kennan led the State Department’s Policy Planning Staff, which developed plans for waging Cold War.

In February 1950, Kennan made what he called a “Cook’s Tour” of Latin America to learn about the region. The official purpose of the trip was to attend a meeting of U.S. ambassadors to Latin America in Rio de Janeiro. Kennan traveled by train to Mexico City and then flew to Caracas, and thereafter to Rio, São Paulo, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Lima, and Panama. If there ever was a case of

his diary that “the sounds of its nocturnal activity struck me as disturbed, sultry, and menacing,” Caracas “appalled” Kennan with its “screaming, honking traffic jams,” and “its feverish economy debauched by oil money.” Rio was “repulsive” with its “unbelievable contrasts between luxury and poverty,” and São Paulo “was still worse.” Montevideo and Buenos Aires did not overly offend Kennan, although they “inflicted on me a curious sense of mingled apprehension and melancholy.” But “in Lima, I was depressed by the reflection that it had not rained in the place for twenty-nine years and by the thought that some of the dirt had presumably been there, untouched, for all that time.” It also “galled” Kennan that he had to call on heads of state in these bleak cities and act diplomatically. It was “all painful and slightly disreputable,” he sighed.¹

When he returned to Washington, Kennan wrote a ten-thousand-word report for the secretary of state on Latin America as a “problem” in U.S. foreign policy. Kennan did not dwell on his personal sufferings in Latin America but persisted in his xenophobia and ethnocentrism. As a general consideration, “it seems to me unlikely that there could be any region of the earth in which nature and human behavior could have combined to produce a more unhappy and hopeless background for the conduct of human life than in Latin America.” Assuming the role of geographer, Kennan pronounced North America as blessed by topography and climate, whereas South America had been cursed. Into “this unfavorable geographical background” came the Spanish conquistadors with their “religious fanaticism, a burning frustrated energy, and addiction to the most merciless cruelty.” The intermarriage of the Spanish with the indigenous population and with African slaves “produced other unfortunate results which seemed to have weighed scarcely less heavily on the chances for human progress.” Kennan repeated the arguments of nineteenth-century North Americans, who alleged that Latin Americans were condemned to perpetual backwardness because of their Catholicism, their racial heritage, and their enervating lives in tropical climes. Kennan theorized that “Latin American society lives by and large by a species of make-believe,” a “little word of pretense,” because Latin Americans implicitly recognized the “bitter realities” of their deficient thought, society, and culture.

Known for his “realistic” approach to international affairs, Kennan had harsh recommendations for the conduct of U.S. policies toward Latin America in the Cold War. He ridiculed Pan-Americanism and multilateral organizations, such as the Organization of American States, as “a form of agreeable and easy escapism from the real problems of foreign policy.” As he told U.S. ambassadors in Rio, U.S. policy should aim at preventing Latin America from being mobilized against the United States, either militarily or psychologically, and at protecting access to “our” raw materials. The United States should not hesitate to remind Latin Americans that the United States was a great power and “that we are by and large much less in need of them than they are in need of us.” Whether Latin Americans liked or understood the United States mattered little. Kennan suggested telling Latin Americans: “We are really only concerned for your respect. You must recognize



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The major challenge for the United States would be to prevent the spread of communism in Latin America, which Kennan predicted would come not from external attack but through internal subversion. Reviewing the history of Monroe Doctrine, Kennan believed the United States had the diplomatic tradition to demand the exclusion of Communists from the hemisphere. Not surprisingly, Kennan doubted whether Latin Americans had the societal resolve to assist the blandishments of the Communists. Kennan therefore concluded that harsh governmental measures of repression may be the only answer; that these measures may have to proceed from regimes whose origins and methods would stand the test of American concepts of democratic procedure; and that such regimes and such methods may be preferable alternatives, to further communist iccesses.² To argue that tyranny and dictatorship in Latin America was vital to U.S. national security did not trouble Kennan. He cited Secretary of State John Quincy Adams who opined in 1821 that cultural, religious, and racial deficiencies would prevent the new South American republics from establishing “free or liberal institutions of government.” As Adams saw it, “arbitrary power, military and ecclesiastical, is stamped upon their education, upon their habits, and upon all their institutions.”³

Kennan’s tone evoked no discussion within the Truman administration. Officials within the Latin American section of the State Department asked Secretary of State Dean Acheson not to distribute the report. Kennan believed that his musings about the cultural deficiencies of Latin Americans were “intolerable.” He thought his report had been locked away, kept out of State Department files. In fact, the report gathered dust in the file cabinet for twenty-five years, until it was declassified in 1976 with other records from 1950.⁴ Kennan left his position in Policy Planning in August 1950. In the preceding months, he, like other officials, focused on the outbreak of the Korean War.

Kennan’s memorandum can be dismissed as the uncharacteristic ravings of an otherwise distinguished public servant. Kennan, forty-six, was perhaps in the midst of some mid-life or career crisis. Kennan, who lived to be 101, changed his views on the Cold War and Latin America. He supported giving the Panama Canal back to Panama and called for the diplomatic recognition of Fidel Castro’s Cuba. He testified against the Vietnam War. He repudiated Ronald Reagan’s strident behavior toward the Soviet Union. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, he observed that “the general effect of Cold War extremism was to delay rather than hasten the great change that overtook the Soviet Union.”⁵ He also warned citizens that the invasion of Iraq in 2003 would bring unforeseen, unwanted consequences. Although undebated and disowned, Kennan’s report revealed the style and substance of Cold War policies for Latin America. Latin America had no significance of its own. It existed to serve U.S. Cold War interests. Latin American leaders were naïve about global affairs and unrealistic in expecting their powerful northern neighbor to assist Latin America’s development. Latin Americans were not

George F. Kennan, a foreign-policy expert, authored the famous article “The Sources of Soviet Conduct” that served as the basis for the containment strategy that the United States pursued against the Soviet Union during the Cold War. In 1950, Kennan also submitted a lengthy report on Latin America. Although Kennan’s superiors in the U.S. State Department declined to circulate his report, Kennan’s views became U.S. policy for Latin America. Winning the Cold War—preventing any hint of political radicalism in the Western Hemisphere—commanded a higher priority than promoting democracy and respect for human rights. (Corbis Images)

POSTWAR VISIONS

As World War II concluded, bright hope rather than George Kennan’s dark pessimism characterized inter-American relations. Both domestic and international developments had drawn the inter-American community closer together. In 1944 only four of the twenty Latin American republics—Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Uruguay—had cultural requisites

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Uruguay—could be called representative democracies that respected liberties. By 1946, only five nations—the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Paraguay—remained authoritarian states. The other in American states could claim in some sense to be democratic. In Guatemala, for example, a mass popular uprising toppled the dictator, Jorge Ubico y Castañeda (31–44). During the twentieth century, Latin American societies had become more complex, with lawyers, doctors, teachers, students, labor, and small businesses forming associations and unions. These “middle sector” groups demanded at the traditional arbiters of Latin American life—the landed oligarchy, the military, and the Roman Catholic Church—extend voting rights and share power. Middle-sector groups also called on the state to promote social welfare by improving health and education and passing laws to protect workers. Leaders like resident Juan José Arévalo of Guatemala (1945–51) admired Franklin Roosevelt and wanted a New Deal for their countries.⁶

The idealism inherent in the war against European fascism and Japanese militarism also undermined tyrants and strengthened the cause of social progressives. Throughout the war, the Roosevelt administration had disseminated propaganda that the war was being fought to protect civil and human rights and to promote economic and social mobility. In Nicaragua, for example, laborers, protesting the regime of Anastasio Somoza García, carried banners declaring “Roosevelt Has Said That the Tyrants of the Earth Will Be Wiped Out.” The Roosevelt administration also signaled that it preferred democratic leaders. In 1943, it denied a request of General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez of El Salvador (1931–44) for one thousand submachine guns through the Lend-Lease military aid program. As a State Department officer noted, “these lethal toys [are] more likely to be used for a very different purpose than they were intended.”⁷ The next year Salvadorans overthrew the despotic Hernández Martínez. The United States appreciated Brazil’s decision to send an expeditionary force to Italy. Ambassador Adolf A. Berle, Jr., a friend of Roosevelt and fervent New Dealer, made it clear that the United States wanted to see a democratic evolution in Brazil. In 1945, he told the Brazilian press that he expected that dictator Getúlio Dornelles Vargas (1930–45) would permit a free election.⁸ The Brazilian military forced Vargas out of office, and elections took place.

Latin American democrats believed that they would have the financial resources to transform their societies. Latin American economies had prospered during the war, as the region served as the arsenal for Allied victory. Latin Americans had accumulated credits of \$3.4 billion, because the capital goods that they wanted to purchase in the United States were scarce because of wartime rationing. Colombia’s foreign exchange reserves, for example, increased by 540 percent during the war.⁹ Latin Americans felt confident not only that they would be able to cash in their reserves but also that the United States would provide new capital. President Roosevelt and his chief emissary to Latin America, Undersecretary of State

expected to wield diplomatic power. Fifty-one nations were charter members of the new United Nations. The United States and its Latin American friends held twenty-one of the votes in the General Assembly. Historians Leslie Bethell and Ian Roxborough perceive the period from 1944 to 1948 as “a critical conjuncture in the political and social history of Latin America.”¹⁰ Reform-minded democrats, who had the backing of the United States, dreamed of a socially just Latin America. In form, Latin America accomplished much between 1945 and 1948. At the U.N. organizing conference held in San Francisco in 1945, the U.S. delegation, at the urging of the new assistant secretary of state for Latin American affairs, Nelson Rockefeller, agreed with Latin Americans that the United Nations should sanction regional security organizations. This agreement became Article 51 of the U.N. charter. All further agreed to let Argentina, which had remained neutral during the war, back into the inter-American community and the United Nations. Thereafter, in 1947, the administration signed a mutual defense pact with Latin America at Rio de Janeiro, and a year later, at Bogotá, it joined with Latin Americans in incorporating Pan-Americanism into the charter of the Organization of American States. The OAS charter explicitly prohibited intervention in the internal affairs of member states.

The Rio Treaty and the OAS reflected the spirit of the Good Neighbor policy and wartime solidarity. But they also reflected different perspectives on inter-American relations. Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson spoke for many U.S. officials, seeing Article 51 as a way to preserve the unilateral character of the Monroe Doctrine and a U.S. sphere of influence. As Stimson noted, “I think it is not asking too much to have our little region over here,” if Russia “is going to take these steps...of building up friendly protectorates around her.”¹¹ In accepting Article 51, President Truman was also affirming the views of President Roosevelt, who assured Latin Americans that the inter-American system would not be supplanted by a new international organization. At San Francisco, Latin Americans, led by Mexico and Colombia, lobbied for the inclusion of regional alliances into the U.N. charter. With the OAS, Latin Americans would have a forum to influence the United States, a treaty that codified the nonintervention principle, and a vehicle for transferring economic aid.

Although Latin Americans achieved their organizational goals, the substance of postwar inter-American relations dismayed them. The United States emerged from World War II as the world’s dominant power with global ambitions and responsibilities; regional concerns would be subordinated to the larger task of rebuilding Europe and Japan and containing the Soviet Union. President Truman and his foreign-policy team also had no background or interest in Latin America. President Roosevelt considered Latin America significant, and he listened to powerful figures like Welles, Berle, and Rockefeller who gave priority to the inter-American community. Truman and his secretaries of state, James Byrnes, George Marshall, and Dean Acheson, evinced little interest in the region, did not speak Spanish or Portuguese, and did not appoint influential people to lead the

displayed the same boorish attitudes toward Latin Americans that permeated George Kennan's infamous memorandum. Truman thought Latin Americans like Jews and the Irish—"very emotional" and difficult to handle. Secretary of Defense in his memoirs that "Hispano-Indian culture—or lack of it" had "piled up its problems for centuries." For Acheson, Latin America meant "an explosive population, stagnant economy, archaic society, primitive politics, mass ignorance, illiteracy, and poverty."¹²

Neither Truman nor his secretaries of state thought they had an obligation to assist what they deemed a benighted region and culture. The Roosevelt administration had scheduled a special economic conference for 15 June 1945. Latin Americans wanted to talk about international commodity agreements, controls on investment, linking the prices of raw materials to finished goods, and economic aid. For the next seven years, the Truman administration would come up with all manner of excuses of why it could not attend an inter-American economic conference. In 1946, for example, the administration delayed action as it engaged in a noisy debate with Argentina's Colonel Juan Perón (1946–55) about his alleged leftist sympathies. The administration feared that an economic conference would be a diplomatic fiasco, with the United States resisting demands for economic aid and commodity agreements. Brazil had already asked in early 1946 for a five-year \$1 billion loan. U.S. officials responded that Latin America would prosper if it ignored free trade and investment principles and prepared for the massive orders of raw materials that would surely come from a rebuilding Europe. By 1946, State Department officials wanted "to kill" the conference idea, but, fearing a stormy reaction from Latin Americans, chose only to postpone it. The United States had reneged on its wartime pledges of economic cooperation. As State Department officer Louis Halle bluntly put it, "the United States no longer desperately needs Latin America."¹³

The handling of wartime contracts further dismayed Latin Americans. The United States had promised not to terminate wartime contracts abruptly, to allocate capital goods fairly, and to remember that Latin America had sold its strategic commodities in a controlled market, with prices fixed. After the war, however, the United States abruptly lifted price controls, and prices rose rapidly; Latin America quickly exhausted its more than \$3 billion in credits. Chile, for example, by selling its copper and nitrates at artificially low prices and buying goods for industrial development in a free market, may have lost \$500 million. In effect, Latin America made a \$3 billion non-interest-bearing loan to the United States and could not collect on the principal. The United States answered that it had repaid Latin Americans by sacrificing men and matériel in war, protecting the hemisphere from totalitarianism.¹⁴

Latin American hopes for economic aid revived after Secretary of State Marshall announced his plan to reconstruct Europe. If the United States was prepared to help former enemies, then a "Marshall Plan for Latin America" might fol-

quashed all hopes of economic aid. In a speech that was greeted by stony silence, Marshall promised only to increase the lending authority of the Export-Import Bank by \$500 million to facilitate trade. The European Recovery Program would aid Latin America by restoring markets for raw materials and tropical foods. Once Europe rebuilt its industrial plant, Latin America would have another source of supply for capital goods. Latin Americans interpreted such arguments to mean that their region would be confined to its traditional role of supplying the industrial world with raw materials. In any case, between 1945 and 1952, Belgium and tiny Luxembourg received more economic aid from the United States than did all of Latin America.

In lieu of economic assistance, the U.S. prescription for Latin America's health included self-help, technical cooperation, liberal trade practices, and, in particular, private enterprise and investment. The Truman administration repeatedly preached that Latin Americans could have stacks of money if they created a "suitable climate" for foreign investors. Latin Americans found such arguments wanting, knowing that Latin America already accounted for nearly 40 percent of U.S. direct investments globally and 30 percent of U.S. international trade. The United States misled Latin America during the war and now "neglected" the region. Debates about the efficacy of international capitalism aside, the Truman administration left Latin America as the one non-Communist area in the world not under a direct aid program, because it positioned its analyses of inter-American relations within the context of the Cold War. The Soviet Union did not threaten the region. As Ambassador Herschel Johnson explained to the Brazilian press, "the situation might be graphically represented as a case of smallpox in Europe competing with a common cold in Latin America."¹⁵

The dreams of Latin American democrats and reformers vanished. In 1948, military officers overthrew new, popular governments in Peru and Venezuela. Elsewhere reform and change slowed dramatically. The Truman administration bore some responsibility for the collapse of democratic reform. Latin American democrats had expected that the United States would help fund social reform. As the Mexican foreign minister put it, economic cooperation was "the one way to provide [the] only sound basis for hemisphere peace." The Truman administration, with its overwhelming focus on Cold War issues, also changed the discourse within the inter-American community. Talk and fear of international communism replaced the promotion of democratic values. Anticipating Kennan's critique of Latin American societies, U.S. diplomats lamented "the revolutionary and anti-democratic traditions embedded in the minds of Latin Americans."¹⁶ In 1944, Nicaragua's Somoza had hesitated to push through a constitutional amendment that would perpetuate his power, fearing both domestic and U.S. reaction. In 1947, he overthrew Nicaragua's new president, who had been in office less than a month, and installed his latest puppet, because the new president tried to oust Somoza from command of the *Guardia Nacional*. The Truman administration initially withheld diplomatic recognition but ultimately relented, recognizing Somoza's

Historians like Bethell, Roxborough, and Greg Grandin go too far, however, in they assign primary responsibility to the United States for the disintegration of democracy and social reform in the immediate postwar years.¹⁷ As the scholar of Brazilian history, Thomas E. Skidmore, observed, U.S. historians often “underestimated the power of conservative forces in Latin America.” Latin American elites fought tenaciously to retain power and private land and labor reforms, sure. In Guatemala, President Arévalo, who enacted land and labor reforms, survived twenty attempts to overthrow him between 1945 and 1951. In Venezuela, the democratic experiment, led by young leaders of the ruling Acción Democrática party or *adecos*, lasted only three years. Military officers, encouraged by aggrieved Latin American economic development assistance.

Military officers, encouraged by aggrieved Latin American economic development assistance.

In November 1948, the Truman administration overthrew President Rómulo Gallegos on 24 November 1948 in a bloodless coup, or *golpe frio*. The Truman administration had been supportive of the *adecos*, approving of their commitment to democracy and reform and their anti-Communist views. The administration lamented the administration deplored “the use of force as an instrument of political change.”¹⁹ The administration deplored “the use of force as an instrument of political change.”¹⁹

ANTICOMMUNISM AND INTERVENTIONISM

During the Truman years, U.S. policy evolved, with anticommunist fears overwhelming aspirations for democracy, social justice, and human rights. The administration initially did not worry that either the Soviet Union or the international communist movement threatened the region. During the war, the United States assisted Latin American nations in establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, its wartime ally. In March 1945, for example, Undersecretary of State Joseph Grew permitted the Soviet ambassador to use his home in Washington so he could meet informally with Brazilian diplomats. As late as mid-1948, the State Department concluded in NSC 16 that “Communism in the Americas is a potential danger, but that, with a few possible exceptions, it is not seriously dangerous at the present time.” The administration professed these views in the same year that it decided that the Soviet Union had a master plan. In NSC 7 of 30 March 1948, which anticipated NSC 68/2 of 1950, the administration warned that “the ultimate objective of Soviet-directed world communism is the domination of the world.” NSC 7 called for a “world-wide counter-offensive.”²⁰

Through 1948, the Truman administration acknowledged that anti-Communist policies had the potential to encourage and sanction wholesale repression in the region. In 1947, the Dominican Republic of Rafael Trujillo had suggested the negotiation of an inter-American anti-Communist agreement. State Department officials knew that the Dominican dictator would use such an agreement to brand all opponents as “Communists” and outlaw, imprison, and murder them. As a policy paper put it, “there would be many cases in which such anti-Communist arrangements would be directed against all political opposition, Communist or other-

forces—the Church, the armed forces, large landowners—flourished in Latin America. “Unfortunately, they sometimes come close to the extreme of reaction which is very similar to Communism as concerns totalitarian police state methods.” Through “extreme selfishness and lack of any sense of social responsibility,” Latin American elites ignored widespread poverty and illiteracy, alienating “large segments of the population which otherwise would probably be anti-Communist.” The United States needed to think hard about cooperating with reactionary forces “in light of our long-range national interests.” Defeating international communism meant cultivating “anti-Communist labor, liberal, and Socialist elements.”²¹ The Truman administration had, of course, undercut that recommendation by denying Latin America economic development assistance.

In mid-1948, the State Department calculated that Communist party membership in the twenty Latin American republics totaled 360,000 people. Scholars have suggested a somewhat higher total membership of 500,000 Communists.²² But Latin American Communists scarcely constituted a revolutionary vanguard. Moscow largely ignored its ideological brethren during the war and in the immediate postwar years. Mexican Communists led by the labor leader Vicente Lombardo Toledano were closely tied to Mexico’s ruling party. Latin American Communists had a history of adhering to Communist theology. A revolutionary situation would not arise until Latin America entered the industrial phase of history. But only larger nations—Argentina, Brazil, Mexico—had partially industrialized. Latin American Communists proved cautious in taking up arms in the Cold War. Cuba’s Communist Party did not join with Fidel Castro until after the Cuban revolutionary won power in 1959. Marxist-inspired, radical nationalists, not Communist Party members, would agitate Latin America from the 1960s on.

After 1949, the Truman administration stopped issuing nuanced analyses of Latin America’s political culture and started professing deep concern about the region. Latin Americans did not suddenly embrace radical ideas. And Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, in the last years of his rule, did not unexpectedly evince interest in Latin America. Anti-Communist fears, both abroad and at home, overwhelmed the good judgment of U.S. officials. The Soviet Union successfully tested an atomic weapon in 1949, Mao Zedong and his Communist forces established the People’s Republic of China in 1949, North Korea, with tacit support from Joseph Stalin, invaded South Korea in 1950. The global balance of power seemed to be turning against the United States. At home, unscrupulous politicians, led by Senator Joseph McCarthy (R-WI) and Representative Richard M. Nixon (R-CA), alleged that traitorous Communists operated within the U.S. government. The United States dragged Latin America into the Cold War. The Kennan Corollary became U.S. policy.

The Truman administration began to criticize publicly attitudes and policies of Latin Americans. Secretary of State Acheson gave one major address on Latin America to the Pan American Union in September 1949. The speech was filled with relevant data. Acheson conceded he had

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at the region's development with public funds. Acheson left Latin America to a young friend, Assistant Secretary Edward R. Miller, Jr. Miller, a graduate of Harvard Law School and a Wall Street lawyer, had grown up in Cuba and Puerto Rico. His father owned sugar plantations and mills in Cuba. Miller knew excellent Spanish and Portuguese. As Miller saw it, Latin America was now in the 1930s, when "the Good Neighbor Policy was virtually our sole foreign policy." At experience, combined with a consequential high-level attention devoted to in America, "had fostered an exaggerated and extreme sense of self-importance the part of individuals connected with Latin American governments." Miller at such views confidential, but he authorized a subordinate, Louis Halle, to reveal them in a July 1950 article, "On a Certain Impatience with Latin America," *Foreign Affairs*. Imitating George Kennan in the 1947 "X" article, Halle chose a pseudonym of "Y." Halle argued that the United States would have to follow the dictates of "noblesse oblige" toward Latin American nations, for they were children, not yet ready to exercise for themselves the responsibility of adult obligations.²³ Miller had requested that Acheson withdraw George Kennan's memorandum from circulation. In fact, both Acheson and Miller shared Kennan's con-

descending outlook toward Latin American civilization. Assistant Secretary Miller also voiced the heightened fear and perception of international communism. Miller and his colleagues imagined threats rather than discovering them. In his 1949 speech, Acheson had noted there was no "direct threat against our independence." In 1950, in a comprehensive review of the region, the State Department concluded that the Communists had "lost ground." As late as 1951, Miller assured Congress that the Soviet Union's role in Latin America at this time will not be great.²⁴ Miller criticized the social and economic policies of Guatemala, but he reckoned that they could be blamed on President Arévalo. U.S. officials also knew that by 1952 five countries had severed "woolly-head."²⁵ Relations with the Soviet Union and outlawed Communist activities. For example, the Chilean legislature passed in 1948 the Law for the Permanent Defense of Democracy, which banned the Chilean Communist Party and removed all Communists from the voter rolls. The Soviets had diplomatic relations with only Argentina, Mexico, and Uruguay and only a minuscule amount of trade in

The Truman administration lacked evidence of Communist subversion and it continued to realize that an inter-American, anti-Communist agreement would be used by authoritarians to "suppress all types of liberal opposition." Nonetheless, the administration decided to redefine the Monroe Doctrine and the OAS charter. In a speech in April 1950, two months before the outbreak of the Korean War, Assistant Secretary Miller reviewed the history of intervention. He condoned the decisions of presidents like Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, arguing that the Monroe Doctrine had been used to forestall European intervention in the hemisphere.

equality of states, but he warned that "if the circumstances that led to the protective interventions by the United States should rise again today, the organized community of American states would be faced with the responsibility that the United States had once to assume alone." The doctrine of non-intervention incorporated into the OAS charter was not absolute; if a member state were threatened by Communist political aggression, the OAS would have to act for the common welfare. This action would be "the alternative to intervention," the "corollary of non-intervention."²⁵

Secretary Miller left much unsaid in his speech. He surely understood that Latin Americans considered the non-intervention pledge the core principle of the inter-American community. The thirty armed interventions in the first part of the twentieth century had outraged Latin Americans. Policy planners in the Dwight D. Eisenhower administration would confidently concede that they would never be able to persuade Latin American states to approve intervention against internal Communist subversion. President Eisenhower approved a secret policy that the United States would take all actions "deemed appropriate" to defeat communism in the Western Hemisphere. Such actions would include covert interventions. Miller's speech represented the most explicit statement that the United States could not honor the non-intervention pledge in the Cold War, until President John F. Kennedy made similar points in his "Kennedy Doctrine" speech of 18 November 1963, his last speech on inter-American affairs. President Lyndon Johnson made the policy obvious when he invaded the Dominican Republic in 1965 and pronounced his "Johnson Doctrine." The "Miller Doctrine" was, of course, a restatement of the Roosevelt Corollary and the Kennan Corollary.²⁶

The Truman administration coupled the Miller Doctrine with a decision to arm Latin America against communism. Defense planners wanted Latin America to be militarily dependent on the United States. Prior to 1941, South Americans had purchased arms and contracted military training missions from Europe, including Germany and Italy. Defense officials proposed an arms standardization for the hemisphere. The United States would provide arms if Latin America would cooperate in postwar hemispheric defense, make available its military bases to U.S. air and naval forces, and agree not to purchase equipment and training from foreign sources.

Although the Truman administration submitted to Congress in both 1946 and 1947 a military aid package for Latin America, it did not secure funding. Congressional critics managed to delay legislation, arguing that military aid was wasteful, would bolster authoritarian regimes, and would trigger a hemispheric arms race. State Department officials silently shared those concerns. In any case, the United States lacked arms to transfer, because programs such as Greek-Turkish aid, NATO, and support for Chinese national forces took priority over

On 19 May 1950, President Truman authorized military aid for Latin American military cooperation.²⁷

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war is in fact a real war in which the survival of the free world is at stake.”²⁸ The document left vital issues unanalyzed. NSC 56/2 did not explain whether the U.S. Union intended to invade Latin America or make clear how providing Latin Americans with obsolete tanks would deter the Red Army. The document also did not resolve the political and diplomatic questions raised by transferring arms to weak, undemocratic nations. What military aid guaranteed, however, was access to high-ranking Latin American military officers, who traditionally favored conservative, anti-Communist policies. For the Truman administration, such actions seemed inconsequential after the outbreak of the Korean conflict. As it was NSC 68/2, the war helped “sell” NSC 56/2. In 1951 Congress authorized \$52 million for direct military assistance for Latin America, and in 1952 added another \$52 million to that sum.

Military aid did not inspire Latin Americans to rally to the U.S. cause. After President Truman declared a national emergency following attacks on U.S. troops in Korea by Chinese forces, Secretary of State Acheson hastily called an inter-American conference of foreign ministers, which met in Washington between March and April 1951. Six years of neglect and broken promises had taken their toll on inter-American solidarity. For this war, Latin Americans were only willing to give “rhetorical” support to their northern neighbor. The conference’s key solution, calling for increased production of strategic materials, was tied to a statement citing Latin America’s need for economic development. Only Colombia responded to requests for troops, dispatching a battalion of troops and a frigate to the Korean theatre. The United States was especially disappointed by Brazil’s refusal to join the war effort. In the previous month, Assistant Secretary Miller had journeyed to Rio de Janeiro to request a division of troops for Korea. Latin America’s largest nation had sent an expeditionary force to Italy during World War II. Miller received a chilly reception in Rio. As the Brazilian foreign minister observed, “Brazil’s present position would be different and our cooperation in the present emergency could be probably greater,” if Washington “had elaborated a recovery plan for Latin America similar to the Marshall Plan for Europe.”²⁹

At the course of inter-American relations, Miller began to argue that the United States would have to grant Latin America at least a small amount of assistance. But the administration was too harried and the economy too strained by the Korean conflict for the United States to consider another economic aid program. The decision by Latin American nations, save Colombia, to sit out the Korean War signaled how far inter-American relations had deteriorated during the Truman years. In both the United States and Latin America, the popular view had been that hemispheric relations had been strong and cordial between 1933 and 1945. In the 1952 presidential campaign, the Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower, exploited the issue. In a speech in New Orleans on 13 October 1952, Eisenhower charged that Latin Americans had lost confidence in the United States. He recalled that during World War II “we frantically wooed Latin America—but after the war the Truman

promises to cooperate economically with its neighbors. The result was economic distress, “followed by popular unrest, skillfully exploited by Communist agents there.” “Through drift and neglect,” the Truman administration had turned a good neighbor policy into “a poor neighbor policy.” Candidate Eisenhower promised change.³⁰

President Eisenhower did not deliver on his campaign promise when it came to inter-American relations. Continuity, not change, would characterize the U.S. approach to Latin America. Just as it had with Europe and Asia, the Truman administration had developed Cold War policies for Latin America that would endure for four decades. The “Kennan Corollary” and the “Miller Doctrine” proved to be long-lasting features of U.S. foreign policies. Latin Americans needed to understand their place in the world. They lived in the U.S. sphere of influence. Their duty was to support the United States in the apocalyptic struggle with the international Communist movement. Any deviance by a Latin American nation from the U.S. vision of the proper world order threatened U.S. security and the global balance of power. Latin Americans often lacked the political maturity to understand how the world worked. The United States had the right and responsibility to correct the international misbehavior of Latin Americans. This meant overthrowing suspect governments and bolstering right-wing tyrants who aped U.S. foreign policies. Indeed, the Eisenhower administration took a momentous step that had far-reaching ramifications for Latin Americans and inter-American relations, when, in 1954, it destabilized a popularly elected government in Guatemala. The covert intervention was not, however, solely the initiative of President Eisenhower and the Central Intelligence Agency. True to the Kennan Corollary, the Truman administration had already begun to move against Guatemalan political and social democracy.